

DEC 21 1921

©CIL 17380 "NO DEFENSE"

Photoplay in six reels

From the novel "The Come Back" by J. Raleigh  
Davies

Scenario by C. Graham Baker

Directed by William Duncan /

Author of the photoplay (under Sec. 62)  
Vitagraph Co. of America of the U. S.

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DEC 21 1911

Author:  
J. Raleigh Davies

"NO DEFENSE"

Director:  
William Duncan

Five Reel Drama

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SYNOPSIS

Mrs. George Austin and her daughter, Ethel, are living on the verge of financial disaster. The creditors are pressing and Mrs. Austin can see only one hope of reprieve from public disgrace - the marriage of her daughter to a wealthy man. Frederick Apthorpe, a man of prominence in legal and political circles - already scheduled by his party to be District Attorney, presents himself as Ethel's suitor. This match would solve Mrs. Austin's difficulties, were it not for the fact that Ethel does not seem to respond seriously to his advances. Mrs. Austin's fears are greatly increased by the appearance of John Manning, a young engineer who has been away. While Manning is entirely eligible in matters of family and breeding, he is not wealthy - so Mrs. Austin frowns on his suit. Ethel, however, likes him. Manning proposes and asks Mrs. Austin for Ethel's hand. The elder woman tells him that she cannot consent to give her daughter's keeping into the hands of one so financially unable to provide for her. If he were to come to them - with a fortune - things might be different. Manning has already known of his rival in the field, although the two had never met. In Manning's office building is a lawyer named Milton Hulst, whose practices concerned themselves principally with blackmail. The attention of the authorities required Hulst to leave town - and a tip on a gold deposit in the North, decided his destination. Manning learns this - is interested - sees a chance to win a fortune in a hurry, and decides to accompany Hulst. Manning bids goodbye to Ethel, but fearing that in his absence pressure might be brought to bear on her - they are secretly married in a little country parsonage. Ethel returns home with her marriage certificate, and Manning strikes out for the mountains in Northwest Canada. There is a third partner - MacRoberts. The three men prospect, with Hulst, showing his yellow nature, and Manning his brave one, until they accidentally make a big strike. They work the mine and accumulate considerable gold. Manning informs his wife of the strike, and of his having engaged passage on the steamer "Columbia", which is to sail from Seattle. The night before his departure from the rude camp, Manning and MacRoberts dream of home, while Hulst craftily prepares to rob his partners. He secures Manning's revolver, and is making away with the gold, when MacRoberts awakes. Hulst shoots him dead and rides away. Manning tries to restore MacRoberts. Hulst stops at the post of the Northwest Mounted Police, accuses Manning of the crime and returns with the officers. Here Manning is found with the dead man - killed by a bullet from Manning's own gun. Manning, unable to convince them of his innocence and Hulst's guilt, is taken to the post. Rather than suffer for a crime he did not commit, he makes a thrilling escape. Pursued far into the mountains, he is wounded, falls from his horse and hides as his pursuers ride past after the riderless horse. Dazed and demented, he is cared for by an old Indian.



In the meantime, the steamer "Columbia" founders off Cape Flattery and Manning's name on the passenger list proclaims him as one of the victims. Ethel reads and mourns his loss, treasuring the secret of her marriage certificate and wedding ring. Affairs become so acute that Mrs. Austin prevails upon Ethel to accept Apthorpe. She does so, and they are married. Manning lingers on, a fever-ridden and demented care of the old Indian. Hulst returns to the city and resumes his old practices. District Attorney Apthorpe investigates his affairs and threatens Hulst with imprisonment. Meantime, Ethel, who has never confided the knowledge of her previous marriage, finds herself neglected by her husband, whose thoughts are wholly on his ambitions to be Governor. A maid, Agnes, who has performed services for Hulst, discovers the marriage certificate and hurries to Hulst, selling it to him. Hulst sees a way to increase his fortune and successfully oppose the District Attorney. Manning regains his health, but finds himself a hunted man in the mountains, unable to communicate with friends. He becomes desperate, makes a final dash to pass the guards on the border, succeeds after a reckless and dangerous experience with the mounted policemen and reaches a railroad town. Here he boards a freight train and heads back to his old home, with the double purpose of revenge and establishing his innocence, and of seeing his wife. Hulst summons Ethel to his home at night to lay down his terms. She arrives veiled, and he discloses the fact that he has the marriage certificate. She is alarmed at the prospect of the publicity he promises to give the matter. Manning has arrived in the city, locates Hulst's home, and through the portiered doorway, witnesses the scene. Here he learns for the first time that he is supposed to be dead - that Ethel has married again, and that she is being terrified by the very man who killed MacRoberts. He enters and interferes - wringing a confession from Hulst's lips. Hulst gets a revolver, shoots and wounds Manning, and the two struggle. Hulst is about to dash out Manning's brains when Ethel, going to her husband's assistance, accidentally steps on the trigger of the revolver, which goes off and kills Hulst. The servants are aroused. Manning - determines to assume the burden of the crime and induces Ethel to leave before the servants break in. Manning is caught, calmly confesses the crime. The District Attorney is interested in the case, as it means a spectacular source of publicity preceding the gubernatorial election. He promises to convict the "tramp" with unusual speed. At the same time he wants to locate the veiled woman who had some connection with the murder. Manning is given a "third degree" but resists all efforts to make him talk. To his lawyer, assigned to him, he offers no encouragement, determining to make this sacrifice for the woman he loves.

Apthorpe, however, in going over Hulst's papers, discovers that Ethel was the woman at the scene of the murder. He is incensed at the danger to his career if this fact is known. Ethel, confronted with the accusation, admits her guilt to her husband and begs him to free Manning. Apthorpe refuses to try his own wife for the murder on the eve of election. The trial goes through to a speedy conclusion, with Manning pronounced guilty. Ethel makes a frantic effort to tell the truth, but Apthorpe silences her with the promise that when he is governor, he will pardon Manning. Comforted with this knowledge, she remains silent. Manning is sentenced to death, and the date of execution set. Apthorpe becomes Governor and Ethel reminds him of his promise. Apthorpe, however, determines to let the law take its course, rather than pardon a man whom he himself had convicted but a few weeks before. It would mean severe public censure for him to do this.

The time of the execution approaches with Manning bearing up bravely, proud of the sacrifice he is making. Ethel, determined that he shall not die, forces Apthorpe to grant a reprieve and a pardon - only after she has threatened to kill herself and leave behind a full confession, implicating Apthorpe as well as herself. The pardon arrives in the nick of time. Apthorpe, says that he will arrange for a quiet separation and that he will have Hulst's estate make restitution to Manning. Then Manning and his wife <sup>can</sup> go away together. The couple are reunited, and head off to a new and untroubled future.

The end.

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